

ETHICAL GUIDELINES FOR AVOIDING PLAGIARISM IN RESEARCH

(For the research scholars)

Definition

Merriam-Webster dictionary defines plagiarism as;

- a) The theft and use of other people's ideas or words as yours;
- b) Use of sources without attribution;
- c) Literary theft, and
- d) Presenting some ideas as own and as it is new, while this idea already exists in another source

As per the Office of Research Integrity (ORI, USA) and Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE, U.K.), plagiarism or misconduct is defined based on the FFP model, i.e., **fabrication**- concerns with making up data or results, instead of producing them by doing research; **falsification**- concerns tampering with research results, research methods, or data analysis, or omitting data or results such that the research is not accurately represented in the research record, and lastly, **plagiarism**- when one does not give due credence or appropriate credit to others' ideas, processes, results, or words.

Broad categories of plagiarism

1. *Intentional*- Intentional plagiarism occurs when the author deliberately, intentionally, or knowingly copies the entire text, paragraph, or data and presents it as its own.
2. *Text/words or ideas/data*- The commonest form of plagiarism, is 'copying a portion of text from another source without giving credit to its author and without enclosing the borrowed text in quotation marks.' Copying of ideas is a common form of plagiarism wherein someone else's ideas, presentations, audio or video files, thoughts, inferences, or suggestions are made into research and presented as their own without proper acknowledgement.
3. *Source*- This type of plagiarism uses previous article's citations without actually reading or cross-referencing the bibliography.
4. *Mosaic or patchwriting*- This happens when one uses the previous article text by replacing, reordering, or rephrasing the words or sentences to give it a new look without acknowledging the original author.
5. *Self-plagiarism*- This happens when
 - The author has added research on a previously published article, book, contributed chapter, or journal, and presents it as new without acknowledging the first article or taking permission from the previous publisher.
 - Submission of the same article or study or set of experiments is dispensed in small chunks to multiple journals to increase the chances of publication or making multiple articles from a single article, known as, 'salami slicing.'
 - When the 'self-plagiarizer' uses shorter passages of texts (or some figures, etc) in repeated instances, it is referred to as inappropriate recycling of material.

6. *Ghostwriting*- In this type the main contributor is not given due acknowledgement, or someone who has not contributed is given due credit.

7. *Collusional*- In this type the author asks a professional agent or institution to write an article and then claims it as its own.

Size does not matter... plagiarism is a plagiarism

Plagiarism may consist in making use of very short passages of text. In fact in principle, it may consist of one word or expression only. But that would have to be a very special, novel word or expression creatively used, e.g., for naming a new concept, perhaps something that throws new light on an area of interest. It would also have to be a situation where the plagiarizer, by plagiarizing, gives the impression that he/she invented the concept. Additionally, If a sufficient number of ordinary sentences not belonging to anyone are put after each other in the same way as by another author, then this may again be considered to be plagiarism.

How to avoid plagiarism

- Always acknowledge the source of the idea, text, or illustration.
- Enclose within quotation marks, all the text that has been copied verbatim from another source. Quotations must be identical to the original, using a narrow segment of the source. They must match the source document word for word and must be attributed to the original author. However, this should not extend to copying a paragraph/s, altogether with the belief that you have cited the reference! Re-drafting of a sentence or two would be necessitated, which is termed paraphrasing.
- When paraphrasing, use your own words. Paraphrasing involves putting a passage from source material into your own words. A paraphrase must also be attributed to the source.
- When summarizing, use your own words. Summarizing is taking information from a source, condensing it, and then putting it entirely into your own words while maintaining the same meaning. Once again, it is necessary to attribute summarized ideas to the source, since the gross idea remains external and NOT your own.
- It is always advisable to cite references when one is not quite sure if the idea/fact they wish to include is common knowledge, or not.
- One must cite references accurately, citing references should be uniform and should subscribe to the guidelines of the research Journal, to which the manuscript is being submitted for publication.
- Avoid writing multiple separate articles if one can cohesively present a large complex study in a single article. Always endeavour for the quality (rather than quantity) of the manuscript that inherently addresses all the issues, and thus is complete in itself.
- It is always advisable to submit a cover letter to the editor of the Journal, clearly stating any instances of overlapping from previous publications, and seeking his/her

advice. This could relate to, say, making use of somebody else's ideas or text without appropriate referencing, since the source or reference cannot be tracked.

Always resort your manuscript or article to 'plagiarism checker software' before submitting the same for publication.

Various websites and programs are available to check plagiarism:

1. Cross Check™
2. WCopyFind™
3. SafeAssign™
4. eTBLAST
5. Viper (<http://www.scanmyessay.com/plagiarism> - free software)
6. www.google.com
7. <http://www.ithenticate.com>
8. <https://turnitin.com/static/index>

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